

Government Guidance – Stay at Home: Guidance for Households with Possible Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection

Updated 16 March 2020

Main messages

- if you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- for anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period. (See [ending isolation](#) section below for more information)
- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- if you have coronavirus symptoms:
 - do **not** go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
 - you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home
 - testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

Ending self-isolation and household-isolation

If you have been symptomatic, then you may end your self-isolation after 7 days. The 7-day period starts from the day when you first became ill

If living with others, then all household members who remain well may end household-isolation after 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day illness began in the first person to become ill. Fourteen days is the incubation period for coronavirus; people who remain well after 14 days are unlikely to be infectious.

After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can return to their normal routine. If any other family members become unwell during the 14-day household-isolation period, they should follow the same advice - that is, after 7 days of their symptoms starting, if they feel better and no longer have a high temperature, they can also return to their normal routine.

Should a household member develop coronavirus symptoms late in the 14-day household-isolation period (for example, on day 13 or day 14) **the isolation period does not need to be extended, but the person with the new symptoms has to stay at home for 7 days.** The 14-day household-isolation period will have greatly reduced the overall amount of infection the rest of the household could pass on, and it is not necessary to re-start 14 days of isolation for the whole household. This will have provided a high level of community protection. Further isolation of members of this household will provide very little additional community protection.

At the end of the 14-day period, any family member who has not become unwell can leave household isolation.

If any ill person in the household has not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, they should contact [NHS 111 online](#). If your home has no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

The cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean someone must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.